

The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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President's Corner – Tom Strikwerda Vision and Goals

In my first column after becoming MOS President (Sept 2014) I said MOS was doing a good job of meeting our Purpose: “*The purpose of this organization is to further educational, scientific, and charitable pursuits relating to birdlife in Maryland.*” After reviewing the Long Range Survey results, which were briefly discussed in the Nov-Dec Yellowthroat issue (Vol. 34, No. 5) and available at our website, and reading several email threads between Board and Committee members recently, I’m acutely aware that there’s a wide diversity of thought in our organization, we’re not meeting the needs or desires of everyone, and some want change. I still think we’re doing well, but are there alternative, new, or better ways for MOS to meet its purpose? By more carefully reviewing the Survey results and discussing issues with the Board and members, I hope to more clearly determine whether changes need to be made and what they might be. And perhaps, together, we can begin to make one or more improvements. Of course, I hope the Board will fully participate in discussions on those topics, and please feel free to weigh in with your thoughts on how we might go about making those changes.

Two topics initially stand out to me and are repeated a number of times in the Survey comments. The first is advocacy, such as for conservation and land preservation. Direct advocacy isn’t specifically called out in our charter, but we do it as an extension of our educational and scientific pursuits, particularly via our conservation committee’s actions. Survey respondents suggested that MOS should do more, either directly or in collaboration with other organizations to achieve our goals. Along that line, in early January, Past President Maureen Harvey and I attended the annual Maryland Non-Profits Legislative Preview Workshop; MOS is one of many member organizations. Although the focus of this year’s meeting was health and healthcare issues in Maryland, “health” in this context included a healthy environment and also negative effects of such things as fracking and pollution runoff, for example. It was quite evident from the workshop that there is a wide range of organizations in Maryland whose purpose is advocacy on environmental and conservation issues. Many of these have paid staff and fundraising efforts to focus on these topics. MOS, through its Conservation Committee for example, could partner with these organizations and leverage our efforts,

rather than attempting to stand up our own initiatives. We already coordinate advocacy activities with Audubon and other Maryland organization but perhaps we can strengthen these efforts to multiply our leverage even further.

Other Survey questions focused on the Annual Conference, our premier statewide event of the year. Comments came from those who like the conference pretty much as it is, and see it as a primarily social event for birders to gather, relax and enjoy birding and see old friends and meet new ones. Others may be looking for change such as an opportunity for MOS members to attend workshops on research and advocacy, or perhaps have competitions, particularly for younger birders. These suggestions aren’t necessarily in direct conflict with our current format but we must ensure that any efforts to improve don’t drive people away while also attracting other members who don’t currently attend.

These are but two of the challenges facing MOS. Will

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anything happen? To be realistic, although some want some sort of change, many are also likely to decline to assist in making those changes, as evident in one of the other survey questions. But I remain optimistic that MOS members will participate in change! Please offer your help to make this the organization that meets your needs.

And just a note to highlight good news! Marilyn Veeck, secretary for the Fredrick Chapter has agreed to take over the *Yellowthroat* Calendar duties from Andy Martin. I want to say "Thank You Andy!" for superbly handling the Calendar duties for ten (!) years and thank Marilyn for being willing to take on the challenge! Please consider doing your part for MOS – we need chairs or members for: Conference, several on Communications, *Yellowbook* update, Earthshare (EFM), MD Birding Trail, Mid-Winter Seasonal Counts, Development/Publicity. Thank you!



2015 MOS Conference

May 15 – 17

Clarion Hotel and Hager Hall Conference and Event Center
Hagerstown, Washington County, MD

The 2015 Conference is almost here but there's still time to register! Many things will be happening. Please join us.

Keynote Speaker: Our keynote speaker, Tim Schreckengost, Master's Degree candidate in Wildlife Ecology at University of Delaware, will talk about the use of radar to assess landbird migration and the importance of identifying critical stopover habitats to conserve migratory landbird populations.

Field Trips: I'm still looking for field trip leaders or area guides. Please contact me if you can help. Field trips will visit many fine county and national parks throughout the area. Did you enjoy the raven in flight by Melinda Byrd featured on the conference brochure? Perhaps you'll add that species to your list! Take advantage of this opportunity, and come out west to Washington County for some fantastic springtime birding.

Poster Session: This popular event occurs during our Saturday night Wine & Cheese Social (soda and beer also included). This is a time to relax and reconnect with old and new conference attendees. You'll get to see interesting posters from local college students and talk with them about their projects.

Silent Auction and Raffle: We are grateful to have Maryanne Dolan running this popular event. Bring your donations to Maryanne on Friday at the conference. If you need to contact her, you may reach her at maryannedolan@gmail.com. Also, please consider volunteering to help Maryanne (see note below). A couple of hours during Friday or Saturday would be a big help. The proceeds will be split between two worthy local organizations – Project OwlNet operations at Lamb's Knoll Banding Station and

the Beavercreek Watershed Society.

Warbler and Sketching Workshops: A heartfelt thank you to Maryanne Dolan for putting together not one but two wonderful workshops. Friday afternoon's Warbler workshop with the knowledgeable and fun Sean McCandless still has plenty of spaces in the large room for more attendees. Saturday morning's Sketching workshop with Ikumi Kayama is about half full as of this writing so don't delay in registering if you want to attend.

Volunteer Incentive: Conference volunteers get to sign up for field trips in advance.

Don't hesitate to contact me with questions. Hope to see you at our 2015 Conference! Please join us in May.

Maureen Harvey, Acting Conference Chair
410-795-3117
pastpres@mdbirds.org



MOS Conference Silent Auction Items and Helpers Sought

MOS Secretary Maryanne Dolan has volunteered to coordinate the fundraising silent auction at the MOS annual conference to be held on May 15-17, 2015, in Hagerstown, MD. She is seeking items or services from donors, including but not limited to books, equipment, art, etc. Also services such as restaurant or retail gift certificates, local bird trip guiding, technical training, a cruise on your yacht, a stay in your mountain cabin, etc. Proceeds will benefit Project OwlNet's Lamb's Knoll Banding Station, and the Beaver Creek Watershed Association. Please call Maryanne to arrange transport of items to the auction if you are not attending the conference. In addition, Maryanne would be grateful for help with preparation, setup, and conducting the auction. For questions or donations, contact Maryanne at 202-733-5204 or Maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.



The YMOS Birdathon: Here We Go Again

Most MOS members have enjoyed at least one birding trip farther afield than their home state. Such trips may visit species-rich states like Florida, Texas, or Arizona, or more exotic locations in South America, Africa or tropical Asia. On these excursions it is not unusual to reap a reward of 100 or more species seen. It is also not unusual to target a short list of "must-see" species that are candidates for addition to one's life list. These memorable sojourns usually last a week or more with several days' birding in the field.

Suppose, however, circumstances required you to condense your birding into only two days. Suppose, further, that

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your “must-see” list included not just a handful but rather 100 species. Finally, suppose that you foolishly had agreed to delete two species from the total seen for each “must-see” you missed. We doubt that many would invest in such a birding tour. But these are the ground rules for the annual YMOS Birdathon.

Each year, the MOS youth program (YMOS) invites Birdathon pledges of \$0.25, \$0.50, or \$1.00 per species. Your support helps defray costs for participation in the annual World Series of Birding (WSB) international competition in Cape May, NJ, and augments youth scholarships for the MOS residential summer workshop, “MD Birds and Bird Habitats,” at Washington College. The Birdathon itself provides priceless training not only in species identification, but also in itinerary planning, critical decision-making, and unselfish team cooperation. The youngsters have already started by agreeing on a Must-See List of 100 species to be seen in just two days of birding (14-15 March this year, rain or shine) on MD’s Eastern Shore. Each miss is penalized as explained above and pledges are owed only on the *net* species total. As an added challenge, contributors are invited to double their per species pledge for each addition above a net total of 100. Net totals in past Birdathons have ranged 97-124 species.

Last year 15 aspiring young birders represented the MOS in the WSB with two middle and two high school teams. Every team scored more than 100 species. Two won their respective divisions: YMOS Raucous Gulls (high school) finished third overall with 203 species; YMOS Marsh Gigglers (middle school) were tenth overall with 163 species. This year there will be three teams and youngsters have elected to cover all of NJ. Each will aspire to break 200, an incredible challenge that, if met successfully, would be unprecedented for the MOS. They will only be able to do so with careful scouting, diligent planning, complete trust in one another’s birding skills – and your generous encouragement.

Please support the 2015 YMOS Birdathon. You can email your pledges to George Radcliffe or Wayne Bell. In return you will receive an advance copy of the Must-See list. Afterward we will report on how the youngsters fared, the amount you owe according to the net species total, and directions on how to fulfill your pledge.

On behalf of this next generation of birders and environmental stewards, thank you very much.

George Radcliffe

radclifg@gmail.com, 410.228.7670

Wayne Bell

wbell2@washcoll.edu, 410.820.6002



Conservation Committee Report: Fall, 2014

The Committee enjoyed a relatively quiet fall quarter. We only composed four letters this quarter, but made up for it by attending several meetings.

The quarter began with a letter to the National Park Service on the off-road vehicle management plan for Cape

Lookout National Seashore favoring an alternative permitting some access, but also preserving habitat.

In September, the feral cat issue arose. Upon learning that the Baltimore County Council was being lobbied to adopt Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR), we wrote them regarding the problems TNR present to cats, wildlife, and public health and urged them to not adopt the policy. In November, having learned that Alley Cat Allies had “allied” with MontCo Animal Services to promote TNR, we wrote the Montgomery County Executive and Council about TNR, urging them to rescind the policy. We have since learned that no such alliance has been concluded, but are still unclear as to where MontCo’s policy stands.

Regarding the cat issue, we enjoyed some relative success. Upon learning that the Dept of Agriculture (DA) was issuing grants for spay and neuter programs and would be considering grant applications, I attended two meetings of the DA’s Spay and Neuter Board. I had alerted the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Joseph P. Gill to the potential for funding TNR and Secretary Gill, in turn, sent a forceful letter to Secretary of Agriculture Hance and had DNR official Jonathan McKnight attend the first Board meeting. I and Mr. McKnight testified against funding for TNR, and the Board deferred consideration of any TNR programs, noting the intervention of DNR. I also reached out to the Dept of Health, but was unable to ascertain what action that department has taken. At the second meeting of the Board, it was decided to form a subcommittee to draft guidelines for dealing with TNR grant proposals. It should be noted that the Board appears to be heavily weighted in favor of TNR. Only one member has voiced actual opposition, and was on the subcommittee to draft guidelines. We do not as yet know what those guidelines are, but they should be public by February 20, 2015.

We wrote the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the reopened opportunity to comment on eagle management and permits. We noted that the service had violated the spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act by failing to institute a full Environmental Impact Statement on a landmark change in policy, to wit, extending the term of incidental take permits for eagles from five to thirty years. We pointed out raptor populations are too dynamic for a 30-year term to make any sense, especially in an era of climate change and shrinking habitat. In other words, we took USFWS to task for this hare-brained idea.

I attended a meeting at Patapsco Valley State Park regarding scoping for a new trail plan. This was prompted by alarmist notices from the Howard Chapter of the Sierra Club regarding the supposed nefarious purpose of the Patapsco Valley Greenway group. The park service made clear that they control what goes on in the park, and intended to develop the trail plan to modern sustainable multi-used standards, keeping trails out of flood plains, and using bench design on hillsides to minimize erosion.

Lastly, I presented on the threat to wildlife posed by the Somerset wind turbine project at a public forum held by Safe for Somerset in Princess Anne on October 16. It was well received, though no County officials were in attendance. MOS also signed a petition to the County Government regarding the turbines, since we are a property owner in the county.

In joint letters, we joined a Center for Biological Diversity

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letter to USFWS on proposed critical habitat modifications. We also joined the Smart on Pesticides Coalition. We also signed on to a Friends of the Earth letter to manufacturers of pesticides regarding neonicotinoids. The final joint letter we signed on to was the Center for Biodiversity letter supporting the candidacy of Representative Grijalva for ranking member of the House Environmental Affairs Committee. Representative Grijalva was selected for that post.

Finally, I have agreed to draft the MOS policy statement on wind power, though my promise of completion by the Holidays is looking in doubt.

Respectfully submitted,
Kurt R. Schwarz
Conservation Committee Chair



ANNE ARUNDEL

In October, *Barbara* and I made a two-week birding expedition to the Azores and Madeira Islands. We have always been fascinated by islands and their birds, in general; however, the Azores and Madeira Islands held a special place for us. I made a brief stop in the Azores years ago which whetted my appetite to see more. Plus, Barbara's grandfather was from Madeira, although she knows little about him, so she always wanted to see the island from where some of her genes flow. I have also been interested in the role of these Atlantic islands in terms of the European and African rarities that they attract and the stopover role that they play as a stepping stone for rarities that have appeared, and will eventually show up, on our North American list.

These islands host a number of endemic species and many endemic subspecies, some of which may be split in the future. The most notable endemic species is probably the Azores Bullfinch, the rarest songbird in Europe. Our trip was very successful; we found all of the expected endemics and lots of North American and Western Palearctic vagrants, as well as whales and dolphins. While not an endemic, one of our most wanted species was the very strange-looking Eurasian Hoopoe which resides on one of the small islands. Not only did we see one, but one day we saw as many as 15, with many at almost point-blank range, where they frequent a golf course! These islands are absolutely beautiful and we stayed at some very unique hotels, including one that was formerly a old stone fort and one that was located on a cliff

overlook where we had to take an elevator from a ground level parking lot, up four stories along the cliff side just to reach the lobby of the hotel. I have not had a chance to process our photos and video clips yet, but one photo of a Hoopoe is attached.

Another note: My lengthy (35-page!) article researching reports on North Atlantic albatross sightings will appear in the next issue of ABA's *North American Birds*.

Phil Davis



CARROLL COUNTY

Dave and Maureen Harvey Go Down Under

In late September we flew to Alice Springs, Australia. We were met by temperatures in the 90's and 100's. With one lost checked bag and one lost carry-on bag, we made do with one pair of binoculars and one hat (it also being Dave's non-birding hat.) Maureen was forced to wear her sneakers. We ruined the hat and the sneakers, but found some birds and eventually met up with our tour group. Four days later, we met up with our luggage.

In the Northern Territory, water is very scarce except near the coast. The birds are not numerous but some are quite unique: birds like the Chestnut-backed Buttonquail, the Inland Dotterel, the very colorful and peculiar Spinifex Pigeon, Chestnut-quilled and White-quilled Rock Pigeons, the Partridge Pigeon, the Black Falcon, the spectacular Major Mitchell's Cockatoo, several different species of nomadic parrots, gorgeous Fairy-Wrens, the very difficult Rufus-crowned Emu-wren, and Dusky Grasswren. We found many challenging species of Honeyeater, the beautiful Cinnamon Quail-Thrush, a few species of Robin, which are nothing like our American Robin, and several species of colorful Finches. Also interesting to see were wallabies, kangaroos, including the 'Big Red', wallaroos, flying-foxes, one dingo, several wild donkeys, buffalo, and brumbies, or wild horses. Also, let us not forget the scourge of Northern Australia, the 'Saltie' (saltwater crocodile).

No trip to the middle of Australia would be complete without a visit to Uluru, the famous red monolith that rises 1,142

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feet above the surrounding plain. It is 280 miles by road from the nearest large town, Alice Springs. The red rock actually glows and changes hues as the sun sets.

We then went on to New South Wales, Queensland, and Western Australia, but those are tales for another time. What a great trip it was!

Dave Harvey

CECIL COUNTY

Cecil Bird Club's two co-presidents though separated by only a few degrees of latitude recently have wildly different stories to tell. Let's start with *Sean McCandless*.

Have you ever heard of Chokoloskee Island Florida? Me neither, that is until a good friend of mine decided to have a "get-a-way" and bought a small lot and moved a trailer on to it. He and his wife have been inviting my wife and me down there for a couple years now to do some fishing and they kept saying "we just know you would love all the birds down there". Well we finally caved in. Chokoloskee Island is located opposite the mouth of the Turner River near the southeastern end of Chokoloskee Bay. The bay is about 10 miles (16 km) long and 2 miles (3 km) wide, and runs southeast to northwest along the mainland of Collier County. It is separated from the Gulf of Mexico by the northern end of the Ten Thousand Islands. Chokoloskee Island is connected to Everglades City on the mainland by a long causeway. The land around Chokoloskee Bay, both on the mainland and the islands, is very low-lying. However, Chokoloskee Island is an exception as it reaches a high point of 20 feet (6.1 m) above sea level. This height is due to the shell mounds built on the island during more than 2,000 years of Native Americans inhabiting the Ten Thousand Islands district of the Glades culture. Our visit in late October proved to be a great choice of timing for fishing and birding. Many of the bird species that had left our much cooler climate of Maryland were passing through Chokoloskee; all sorts of Waders, Warblers, Vireos, Thrushes, etc... This area has its own specialties that are there year round and are very exciting for us Marylanders to see. Probably my favorite would have to be the Roseate Spoonbill. I am always amazed at the variation in the pink color of their plumage. Like the American flamingo, their pink color is diet-derived, consisting of the carotenoid pigments, canthaxanthin and another carotenoid called astaxanthin. Canthaxanthin and astaxanthin can be found deposited in flight and body feathers. The colors can range from pale pink to bright magenta, depending on diet, age and location. Unlike most herons, spoonbills fly with their necks outstretched and as an old friend of mine use to say, "They look like a pink egret carrying a bagel".

As we were leaving Chokoloskee Island to head back to the airport, I looked out over the bay and could see a mangrove tufted in pink at the top. I felt a bit sad leaving the land of the Spoonbills. Not knowing when I will return, not knowing the next time I will come across one of those pink beauties. Oh, how I miss that place, especially this time of year. -*Sean McCandless*

Cecil Bird Club's Co President *Ken Drier* and *Kimberleigh Drier* journeyed to India and Nepal for three weeks with the Overseas Adventure Travel organization. Besides standing in front of the Taj Mahal and seeing many other incredible temples



Sean McCandless ©

and palaces there were ample opportunities to bird. From the hotel in the middle of New Delhi we easily saw Indian Grey Hornbills, Rose-ringed Parakeets, and Black Kites. Purple Sunbirds and Oriental White-eyes were also noted. Of course Rock Pigeons, which are native to this region were everywhere. It is holy to feed them so there are giant flocks at every stop throughout the countries. In Jaipur, the Pink City, Red-wattled Lapwings were in abundance walking around the city parks. Rufous Treepies, in the jay and magpie family were also numerous. The next stop was Ranthambore National Park and tiger sanctuary. As we hiked up through the forest to a temple complex monkeys hung from what seemed like every tree. Flocks of up to twenty Indian Peafowl, or Peacocks, native to India, could be seen flying and walking about the temple complex along with Plum-headed Parakeets at the top of the mountain. Very cool. The next day while on our morning wildlife drive Black-rumped Flameback Woodpeckers, White-throated and Pied Kingfishers, Painted, and Wooly-necked Storks along with Asian Openbills were some of the highlights. That was of course until we saw the tiger. The group had several good looks from our open vehicle as a big three year old cub came out of the forest and into the open. We were able to observe this beautiful creature for about 15 minutes in all. Journeying on to Agra and the Taj Mahal we found Eurasian Spoonbills, Dollarbirds and Egyptian Vultures at the Taj. This is in the middle of the city as well. Upon reaching Kathmandu in Nepal we stayed just outside of town at a jungle resort. Again monkeys were everywhere and the rooms had signs posted on the windows telling us not to leave them open or the monkeys would invade the rooms. Here on the complex grounds Great Barbets were the highlights. We journeyed to the top of a mountain to a restaurant for lunch and a view of the surrounding Himalayas including Mount Everest. An old favorite the Golden Eagle plied the skies over the mountains. Also on a smaller scale Himalayan Swiftlets. That night back at the hotel we met and had a presentation by Sherpa Maya, a member of the tribe of Sherpas who act as guides for the mountain climbers in the region. She was also one of the first women to summit Mount Everest. It was a fascinating evening. Finally as we were at the airport to fly home, Common Hoopoe and Black Drongo closed out an extraordinary adventure. The people we met along the way were so very friendly and often wanted to have their picture taken with us.

Ken Drier

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HARFORD COUNTY

In early December I traveled with Ecoquest Travel www.ecoquesttravel.net to Japan for “Dancing Cranes in the Land of the Rising Sun.” The trip took me to three islands, each with unique birds, foods, and culture. Starting in Tokyo on the island of Honshu we spent the first morning birding in the gardens of the Shinto shrine of Meiji-jingu. Brown-eared Bulbul was a bird we would hear and see all over Japan. Other common birds included Japanese White-eye, Large -billed Crow, Varied Tit, and Pygmy Woodpecker. We also visited the famous Buddhist Senso-ji Temple and did a little shopping along the way. The rain definitely affected our visit to the Imperial Palace Gardens.

Next morning we flew to Kushiro on the northern island of Hokkaido. This island boasts 20% of Japan’s land area but only 5% of the population. It is known for its dairy. It is also home to the majestic Red-crowned or Japanese Crane. We watched the cranes feeding and calling amongst flocks of Whooper Swans at the Akan Crane Center. White-tailed and Steller’s Sea Eagle were spotted on the ice and gathering in the snow covered trees along the river. Our bus driver was a birder and he took us to a Ural Owl roost. We took a boat out of Ochiishi two mornings in a row. Birds like Pigeon and Spectacled Guillemot, Ancient Murrelet, Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Duck and others made the frigid temps bearable. But Hokkaido had even more bird treats in store. We watched three rare and endangered Blakiston Fish-owls feeding in the evening near Rausu. The next evening we spotted more at a feeding station set up at our Ryokan (Japanese Inn). These birds are huge, 24-28 inches tall weighing 7- 10 pounds! Two pair of Hazel Grouse were spotted the morning we departed Hokkaido.

Next stop was the southern island of Kyushu and the Izumi Plains, the wintering site of some 14,000 migrating Hooded and White-naped Cranes. We also spotted Sandhill and Eurasian or Common Crane. The morning flight of this enormous gathering was a feast to both eyes and ears! We witnessed the event two mornings. After birding several other areas on the island, we flew back to Honshu.

From Tokyo we took the bullet train to Nagano and then our bus to the town of Yudanaka and Kanbayashi Onsen (hot springs), where we spent the night. It was snowing when we arrived and continued through the night and into the next morning. It was perfect weather to walk the trail to Jigokudani Onsen, the hot springs favored by Japanese macaques or snow monkeys. These monkeys are quite photogenic, as they play in the snow and soak in the hot bath. For the trip I saw 113 of the 118 species spotted and 45 were life birds.

Space does not permit me to expound on Japanese gastronomy and dining or on our quaint Japanese accommodations. Japan is a unique, impressive, and welcoming country with much to offer birders.

-Jean Wheeler

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Bill and Elizabeth Adams report that in December they went on the Audubon Naturalist Society trip to Ecuador led by Stephanie Mason and Gustavo Canas. “We began the trip in the Mindo region staying at the delightful Sachatamia Lodge with its glorious hummingbird and tanager feeders. A highlight of the trip was a



visit to the Angel Paz Preserve. Its owner and proprietor, Angel Paz has turned his farm into a birding preserve and is himself the famous ‘Antpitta Whisperer.’ After a splendid visit to his blind to observe displaying Andean Cock-of-the Rocks he took us on walks on various trails where he, in turn, called out Giant, Ochre-breasted, Chestnut-crowned and Yellow-breasted antpittas for stunning views and great photos. The next couple of days were spent exploring some of the higher Andes areas near Quito where we got another Antpitta, the Rufous Antpitta. After that we descended into the Amazon Valley to the Napo Wildlife Preserve, with wonderful birds including the Olive Oropendula, Orange-crowned Manakin, Chestnut-capped Puffbird and White-chinned Jacamar. Also common was the wonderful, ‘prehistoric’ Hoatzin. We visited a wonderful clay lick where we got stunning views of Scarlet Macaws and Orange-cheeked Parrots.” In addition, Bill got his 2500 life bird, the Opal-rumped Tanager, in the Napo region.

Speaking of Ecuador, *Bob Mumford* has created a 252-page photographic coffee table book entitled *The Exquisite Birds of Ecuador* that resulted from 16 trips to that Andean country over seven years. The book includes 322 images and 239 species, ranging in size from tiny hummingbirds to huge raptors and flamingos. Bob visited over 60 sites from the Napo River in the east to the Pacific Coast on the west and from the Columbian border in the north to the Peruvian border in the south. The foreword to the book was written by former US Ambassador to Ecuador, Heather Hodges, and the book was endorsed by Dr. Bob Ridgely, the author of *The Birds of Ecuador Field Guide*. Eighty images from Ecuador can be viewed on Bob’s web site: www.naturalimgs.com

Tom Kimbis, father of 12-year-old budding world birder *Kelly*, writes, “Well, in our second full year of birding, my daughter Kelly and I passed our target of 300 worldwide birds, reaching 325 with a Snowy Plover sighting in Ft. Myers Beach, FL. The year’s highlight was a trip to Austria, where we stumbled on a gentleman in a tiny town outside Vienna who turned out to be not only among the best-known Austrian vintners, but also one of Austria’s foremost birders! He kindly zipped us off in his truck to otherwise hard-to-reach parts of the region to see dozens of wonderful birds in undisturbed locations- including magical displays of stunning purple herons and swarms of bee-eaters! It

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was a great year. Thanks to all our fellow MD birders for helping us continue to learn!"

Starting about mid-year *Gerry Hawkins* realized that he had a chance to see 500 bird species during 2014 in the ABA's North American checklist area, so he planned the second half of the year accordingly. As a result, in 2014 Gerry recorded 546 species in eBird in the ABA area. Of these, 545 were seen in the Lower 48, with the one exception being Northwestern Crow, which was seen on a day trip to Vancouver Island in British Columbia. As a result of a trip to Costa Rica that started a few days before the end of the year, the total number of bird species recorded by Gerry in 2014 in the American Ornithologists Union's checklist area, which consists of all of North America, including Central America, was 756. According to eBird, in 2014 Gerry finished 8th in number of species in the ABA checklist area, tied for 6th in the Lower 48 and 13th in the AOU checklist area.

Lynn Selby and *Karen Grisez* attended the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival in Harlingen, TX for the second time in November. Karen writes, "Last year's Amazon Kingfisher did not make an appearance, and it poured rain the first several days of the festival. Nevertheless, we still found some new birds and the leaders went out of their way to give us a great educational experience despite the weather. In addition, I had the chance for a short business trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico in early December. I could see pelicans and a few shorebirds easily from the hotel, but the highlight of the trip was seeing both male and female Puerto Rican woodpeckers on a short walk into the pine forest on the way to the airport. It was wonderful to see the explosive red, especially on the male."

Stephanie Lovell writes: "While visiting family in California, I had an opportunity to visit one of my favorite places, Bolsa Chica Wetland, on New Year's Eve. It was a beautiful sunny day, a little crisp with a sharp breeze, and lots of water birds starting with American Coots. Others included: American Widgeon, Lesser Scaup, lots of grebes--Western, Horned, and Pied-billed, Tri-colored Heron, Great Blues, Long-billed Curlew, Willets, Avocets, Western Sandpipers feeding on the flats, Snowy and Great Egrets, Brant, and fighting Surf Scoters out on the water. A couple of Peregrines sat out on an island. In my opinion, the Pintail Duck is one of the handsomest, and there were lots of them. So, for my only day of birding it was a splendid day."

From *Jim Nelson*: "A writer for National Geographic accompanied MBC members *Linda Friedland*, *Evelyn Ralston*, and *Jennifer Kawar* as they participated in the Seneca MD/VA Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, December 14. She found the experience very interesting and informative and featured them extensively in her online article about the 115th annual Christmas Bird Count." The article can be read at <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/12/141227-christmas-bird-count-anniversary-audubon-animals-science/>

Scott Young writes: "As a new eBird lister, I've found that 'My eBird' doesn't always offer some of the features that I wanted. Therefore, I developed an electronic journal for listing my birds based on Filemaker Pro. Unlike eBird, there are a number of data fields specifically designed to accommodate a bird's order and family (in addition to genus, species, and subspecies) as well as up to three pictures that you or others took (as well as information fields for those three pictures). There are drop-down

lists for 4- and 6-letter alpha codes, sex, date, and country and state where initially spotted. There is also a field to enter whatever notes you wish. Of course, your data can be sorted or grouped in many, many ways." Further information is available at <http://www.wsyacy.com/WSYBirdingFile.html> or by e-mail to Scott Young at wsyacy@verizon.net

David Kidwell reports that he ticked his 1,000th life bird while on a trip in October to South Korea. "I was in Korea for work, so all of my birding was in the couple of days before and after my meeting. While touring the grounds of the Deoksugung Palace in Seoul, I came across of a mixed flock of birds containing Yellow-browed Warbler, Daurian Redstart, and multiple species of tit, including a Long-tailed Tit for life bird number 1,000. Other nice sightings were a pair of endangered Black-faced Spoonbills, 'wild' Mandarin Duck, and White-naped Cranes while touring the DMZ. The local USO office in Seoul offers nearly daily tours of the DMZ that are complete with a military escort. If you ever find yourself in Korea, I highly recommend it. Since the DMZ is heavily mined and mostly uninhabited, it is one of the few relatively pristine areas in Korea with easily the highest levels of biodiversity in the country. It's an important wintering area for White-naped and Red-crowned Cranes. The DMZ tour also allowed me to tick several species for a North Korea 'list': Common Buzzard, Eurasian Magpie, and the ubiquitous Brown-eared Bulbul."

No Montgomery report would be complete without the story of some exotic destination from *Gail Mackiernan*, and so she writes: "In November, *Gail Mackiernan* and *Barry Cooper*, along with a British friend Tony Quinn, spent 11 days birding in Sri Lanka, guided by Deepal Warakagoda, who wrote "Birds of Sri Lanka." They found 33 of the island's currently recognized 34 endemic species, as well as a number of other special birds that winter there. Sri Lanka is a scenic country with lots of good habitat and a bird-friendly Buddhist culture. Top birds included Sri Lanka Spur Fowl, Serendib Scops Owl, Sri Lankan Magpie, Indian Pitta, Kashmir Flycatcher, Pied Thrush and Lesser Adjutant. The group also had a great connection with wild Asian Elephants at Udawalawa National Park. (However, the huge number of blood-sucking leeches at Sinharaja National Park was not so enjoyable!) At the end of the Sri Lanka trip they, along with *Sally Wechsler*, boarded the M/V *Discovery* for a cruise from Sri Lanka to Mauritius. Sea-birding en route was rather underwhelming – warm equatorial waters are often bird-free zones – although they did tick some new species such as Barau's Petrel. On the other hand, land birding on the Seychelles and Mauritius was excellent. In the Seychelles they saw all of the island endemics save the white-eye (including the almost-never-seen Scops Owl), as well as the jazzy Crab Plover. They also took a small boat out to Aride Island where some of the world's rarest birds, such as Seychelles Magpie Robin, can be found. This enjoyable visit was topped off by a Creole barbecue on the beach. The tropical climate didn't stop Port Victoria from mounting an incredible display of Christmas lights! On Mauritius, our team enjoyed a clean sweep of the endemics including goodies such as Pink Pigeon and Mauritius Kestrel. Alas, no Dodo was sighted unless one counted the myriad carved, ceramic, stuffed and painted specimens being sold everywhere!"

-Chris Wright

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In Memoriam: Emmalyn Holdridge, Howard County Bird Club Treasurer from 2000 to 2015

On January 5, 2015, we lost one of our very special members of the Howard County Bird Club; our long-serving and much loved treasurer, Emy Holdridge. Emy has been a member of the Club since 1987. Emy was quiet and reliable at our board meetings, and a lively presence on our field trips. During the time she was Howard County Bird Club Treasurer, she also served as the Treasurer of the Maryland Ornithological Society for 6 years. Others will remember her service as the Chair of the Friends of the Patuxent Wildlife Center and her endless devotion to the refuge as a volunteer. Emy battled cancer until the last, actively taking care of her treasurer's duties until the last week. She will be greatly missed by all.

Robin Todd
President
Howard County Bird Club



The Impact of Buildings on Birds

Wednesday, April 22, 2015: Meadowside Nature Center (5100 Meadowside Lane, Rockville, MD)

Building collisions kill up to a billion birds per year and there are some simple solutions to mitigate this situation. Speaker, **Lindsay Jacks** is an Avian Keeper at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore and the coordinator for Lights Out Baltimore, a non-profit that strives to make Baltimore safe for migratory birds. Her presentation will highlight building design problems, solutions, and how supporting lights out programs in cities can save birds.

This FREE presentation is suitable for ages 14 & up. Check-in and light refreshments at 6:45; one-hour lecture/Q&A at 7:00. It is requested that all those interested register at ParkPASS.org (available mid-February), or by calling 301-258-4034, anytime.



Birds of Note – by Les Roslund

Many Maryland birders rushed out in early January of 2015 to get the best possible start on their birding for the new year. Lots of great birds were found and reported, and some of the best species are still being enjoyed nearly a month later. One of the finest finds was by Linda Friedman of Montgomery County who discovered a beautiful female COMMON REDPOLL feeding at the Visitor Center of the Black Hill Regional Park, Montgomery County. Though a few others of the species have been reported, the Black Hill bird has been the most reliable and has provided great viewing for many birders right on up to the time of this writing (Jan 25). The most recent sighting was reported by Fred Fallon of Huntington.

Usually SANDHILL CRANES are seen in Maryland either as lucky views of fly-over migrants or as birds at rest for a few days while on their migration path. This winter one group of SANDHILL CRANES has chosen to linger longer than usual in our state. The favored resting site is a corn stubble field beside Bradshaw Road near Kingsville in Baltimore County. The food supply and predator protection conditions seem to be fulfilling their needs. In the first crane report for this season, Dave Littlepage of Abingdon, Baltimore County mentioned seeing four SANDHILL CRANES at the site on Dec 8. For the next two weeks, crane sightings have been regular and visitors have reported presence of numbers as high as 31 of these magnificent birds. The thirty-one were found by Keith Eric Costley of Baltimore on Jan 19. These birds are thought to be part of the flock that normally winters in Florida. Though just passing through, this winter the birds have provided lots of joy for birders of our region.

As a delightful surprise this year, a beautiful bright red male SUMMER TANAGER in his year-round plumage has been providing a winter treat for residents of Kentlands, Montgomery County. The treat began on Jan 17. Cindi Lostretto of Kentlands was the first to notice the bird, and Peter Lostretto promptly reported it. Subsequently many people have raced to the site to get a view and most have not been disappointed. This sociable and feisty and chatty bird has taken over portions of the balcony of one of the Kentlands buildings while showing lots of appreciation for the food that the residents are providing. After a brief absence the bird was relocated by Clare Wayner and Miles Marshall of Kentlands. On Jan 22 Nikki DeBraccio of Timonium filed an excellent photo of the bird as part of her eBird report. Daily sightings were continuing as of Jan 25. Back on Dec 11 a Montgomery County friend of Gemma Radko had seen and photographed a male SUMMER TANAGER visiting a feeder for two days. After that it disappeared. Perhaps the Kentlands visitor is the same bird.

While on the subject of out-of-season bird sightings, two warbler species fitting such a category took up residence in the shrubbery of the Essex Park-and-Ride site in Baltimore. The first, a CAPE

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Birds of Note continued from page 8

MAY WARBLER in winter plumage, was found by Eddie Smith on Dec 20 during the Middle River Christmas Bird Count. This delightful little bird was successfully relocated each day from the 20th until the Jan 10. Dave Powell was the last birder to report seeing it. The second warbler, a NASHVILLE WARBLER, was discovered Dec 27 by Nikki DeBraccio. The two warblers stayed in the same vicinity for several days. The final reported sighting of the NASHVILLE WARBLER was filed on Jan 7 by Barry Marsh. During their stay at the Park-and-Ride these birds were enjoyed by many birders. It isn't every winter day that one can track down two warblers at the same place and be confident that parking will be available while you are searching.

TUFTED DUCKS manage to turn up in Maryland every few years, and 2014 was one of those years. On Dec 17 a single TUFTED DUCK was found by Tim Carney at Swan Creek in Anne Arundel County. On the 17th Tim found the bird in a cell of the wetland area, in the company of upwards of 4000 other ducks, mostly SCAUP, RUDDIES, and CANVASBACKS. For the next two days small numbers of dedicated birders managed to relocate the bird, even though its tuft was pretty short and much of the time the bird was hidden amongst the other ducks in the cell. Then, in early afternoon of the 19th, Hugh Fleischmann found the bird when it was about 10 feet off shore and attained the views that everyone had been hoping for. After that, no additional sightings of the bird were reported.

Christmas Bird Counts often produce birds that attract and entertain local birders for weeks to come. Such was the case for a SEDGE WREN that was discovered Dec 14 by Mikey Lutmerding during the lower Kent County CBC. This bird was found before dawn near the entrance gate of Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, and was subsequently enjoyed by many birders. Often it was heard only, but patience occasionally led to very good sightings. Bob Ringler made the trip to Eastern Neck on Dec 26 and reported the following: "In the marsh near the gate a wren started chattering with sharp 'chacks'. It perched briefly in the grass at the side of the road showing bold stripes on the back and extensive buffy underparts." The bird continued to be seen or heard or both for several more weeks. On Jan 17 Elaine Hendricks reported what appears to have been the final hearing.

The Jan 4 Christmas Bird Count in Sandy Point State Park provided fine views of BROWN PELICANS (6), SANDERLINGS (4) and SNOW BUNTINGS (2), along with all three scoter species. The skilled observers were Dave Mazurkiewicz, Marcia Watson and Gene Scarpula. The SNOW BUNTINGS seemed to like the habitat, for they stayed around and were successfully relocated for several days. The final reported sighting came from Hugh Fleischmann on Jan 11. The bird provided Hugh with a lifer after he persevered by making three visits to the park in hopes of finding it.

On Jan 25 Dave Palmer of Easton, Talbot County, spotted a GOLDEN EAGLE in a large oak tree beside the largest wetland pond of Pickering Creek Audubon Center. Dave was leading a group of 18 birders on a Talbot County Bird Club trip. All participants got excellent binocular or scope views of this bird.

In recent years Pickering Creek has become a fairly reliable place to find wintering GOLDEN EAGLES. The most reliable place in the region for finding GOLDEN EAGLES is in nearby Blackwater NWR, Dorchester County, where there have already been several GOLDEN EAGLE sightings this year. The most recent was reported by Jim Brighton of Tunis Mills, Talbot County, who found one Jan 17 beside Greenbrier Swamp on Bucktown Road, Dorchester County. This bird was seen within a kettle of 28 BALD EAGLES and many more TURKEY VULTURES.

As usual for this time of year, the Chesapeake Bay near Black Walnut Point, Tilghman Island, serves as a feeding and resting place for numerous ducks and geese, and also for cormorants and grebes. Usually most of these birds remain so far away from shore that it is nearly impossible to identify them. However, on Jan 21 many of the birds were foraging quite close to the shore due to nearly windless conditions and mild temperatures. Les Roslund of Tunis Mills, Talbot County, visited the site on the 21st and was rewarded with great views of a RED-NECKED GREBE as it fed near the shore in the company of three HORNED GREBES. Word was circulated that the bird had been present, but no additional sightings were reported.



Committee Members Needed

The Scholarship Committee needs two more members. It's an easy seasonal job. No heavy lifting. Scholarship applications need to be reviewed in late November, early December. Typically, there are eight applicants to review. Counties already represented on the committee are Allegheny, Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery. We need members from other counties. For more information or to apply contact Kate Tufts: ktufts@verizon.net.

A special thank you goes to this past year's committee members: Charlotte Folk, Priscilla Thut, Anna Urciolo and Laurie Lewis.

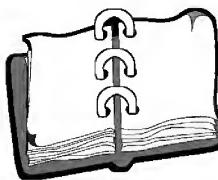
Kate Tufts
Scholarship Committee Chair



Maryland Birdlife – 2015

Thanks to everyone that has submitted an article or note for the Spring 2015 issue of *Maryland Birdlife*. The issue is at capacity and will be published in late spring. I am now accepting submittals for the Fall 2015 issue. Submissions are due by August 1, 2015. Please contact me at ejscarp@comcast.net if you plan to submit for the fall issue or if you need additional information. Thanks for your continuing participation.

Gene Scarpulla, Editor,
Maryland Birdlife



MOS Calendar

March - April 2015

By Andy Martin

Sunday, March 1

F Frederick. Woodcock Excursion. Location TBD. Contact leader, David Smith at 410-549-7082 for meet location and time.

H Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader: Jeff Culler, cullersfuls@hotmail.com or 410-465-9006.

T Talbot. Dorchester County. Our itinerary will be dictated in part by any rarities that might be present in Dorchester Co. It could take us to Hooper's Island, Toddville, or Elliott's Island. High rafts of Redheads, a few Long-billed Dowitchers, a Rough-legged Hawk or two, and perhaps an American Bittern would make for a nice afternoon. We will stay afield late enough look for Short-eared Owls and Black-crowned Night Herons, and listen for rails. Dinner afterwards in Cambridge is optional. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at Noon. Leader: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002.

Tuesday, March 3

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Tonight: Speaker and topic TBA. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Info: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, March 4

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "Three Centuries of Birds, Artists and Writers Before Audubon" by Janet Millenson. 7 PM at the Carroll Nonprofit Center, 255 Clifton Blvd, Westminster. Contact Don Jewell at jewelldg@gmail.com or 410-259-4716 for more info.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program and Speaker: TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton, Rm B120. For more info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, March 5

MEETING. **Frederick.** Members' Night. This will feature a variety of short presentations of photos, slides, and/or videos from our members. Who knows where it may take us! Please let Tom Humphrey know in advance if you want to be on the agenda. 7 PM at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info contact Tom Humphrey, Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org or

301-696-8540.

H Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, March 7

H Anne Arundel. Robinson Nature Center. New AABC trip location to a Howard Co park. Meet 4 PM at the Robinson Nature Center. Contact leader, Barbara Johnson at 410-703-4664 for directions and add'l trip details.

H Frederick. Frederick County Waterfowl. Visit Frederick Co hotspots in search of lingering waterfowl, including Kershner's Pond. Contact leader, Mike Welch, 301-685-3561 for meet place and time.

H Harford. Emory Knoll Farms. This trip offers a great chance to find a variety of late winter/early spring songbirds including Fox Sparrow, Pine warbler and tree sparrow. We will walk the gentle trails for about one mile at a leisurely pace. Meet at the Rtes 165/543 P&R at 8 AM. The leader is Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905 or newarkfarms@gmail.com.

H Howard. Waterfowl Search. Meet at Broken Land Pkwy/Rte 32 P&R (West side) at 8 AM. We'll carpool to search the Howard Co waterways for ducks, grebes, mergansers, and loons. Chance of an early migrant. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643 or krschwa1@verizon.net.

H Kent. Chesapeake Farms, Kent County. Wintering waterfowl, raptors, White-crowned and other sparrows. Half day, bring snacks. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MOS. BOARD MEETING. 10 AM. Hosted by Howard Bird Club. Location TBD. Contact Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com for add'l info.

H Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes brushy fields, woods, and hedgerows for a good mix of species. Side trip to freshwater wetland at Horsepen Branch also possible. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

Sunday, March 8

(Note: Daylight Savings Time Starts...set clocks ahead!)

H Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for waterfowl, raptors, and passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Crk. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet

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8:30 AM (contact leaders for meet location). Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

Carroll. Pennsylvania's State Museum. Join us for a visit to Harrisburg to see an exhibit featuring early works by the Father of Ornithology, Alexander Wilson. Meet 11 AM at Don Jewell's house for a light luncheon and then carpool from there. Contact Don at jewelldg@gmail.com or 410-259-4716 if you plan to attend.

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leaders: Richard and Renee Peters, Richard@rrrpeters.org.

Talbot. Casson's Neck, Dorchester County. Home of the Wests. Bird their 100+ acres with a mix of open fields and pastures, over a mile of waterfront, marsh, hedgerows and forests. We should get a nice variety of birds. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 6:30 AM.

Monday, March 9

MEETING. **Talbot.** Speaker and subject TBA. 7 PM at Wm. Hill Auditorium, 501 Dutchman's Ln, Easton. For more info, contact Terry Allen at pattyallen10@hotmail.com or 410-829-5840.

Tuesday, March 10

MEETING. **Allegany/Garrett.** This is something new for the Club. Come with your pictures of birds you have seen far afield or in your back yard (bring on a flash drive), birding stories, poems, anything you would like to share with the Club. J.B. Churchill has volunteered to be on hand to answer questions about eBird birding apps, and electronic birding devices. Should be a fun evening for all! 7 PM at Compton Hall, Rm 224, Frostburg State U. For add'l info contact Mary Huebner at marybrd22@gmail.com.

MEETING. **Kent.** "Venezuela" by *Don Messersmith*. 7:30 pm, Wesley Hall at Heron Point, off East Campus Ave, Chestertown. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

Montgomery. Informal Late Afternoon Walks Until Dusk. Joint MBC/ANS trips. Meet at the end of Seneca Rd at Riley's Lock "on the bridge" at 5 PM. After checking out the river we will proceed to Hughes Hollow. Highlights here will include waterfowl flying into roost. We will try for displaying woodcock if they are in the vicinity. Bring scope, flashlight, and wear "muddy conditions" footwear. Reservations not required. For more info call Jim Green at 301-742-0036 (m) or jkgbirdman53@gmail.com.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** "Does Tree Species Matter?" Presented by *Desiree L. Narango*. The effects of native and non-native vegetation on food resources for breeding birds. 7:30 PM, College Park Aviation Museum, 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Dr, College Park. For more info call 301-509-2212 or go to www.pgaudubon.org.

org/programs.html.

Wednesday, March 11

Baltimore. 70 Year Anniversary Bird Walk at Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). On March 11, 1945, the first field trip by the fledgling Maryland Ornithological Society, now known as the Baltimore Bird Club, took place at Lake Roland. Commemorating this, we repeat the walk at the same site 70 years later. Meet time is 8 AM. Leader TBD. For add'l details, check the Baltimore Bird Club (BBC) website at <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/> or contact Pete Webb at 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com.

Harford. Timberdoodle Search. Meet at 6:45 PM at the commuter lot at Rte 155 and I-95 and proceed to a nearby location that has produced fascinating Woodcock activity as darkness begins to descend. Leading are Elaine Beery, 410-272-6037 or ehbeery@yahoo.com and Jane Scocca, 410-272-8870 or jane@scocca.org.

Thursday, March 12

MEETING. **Howard.** "Argentina: Bird Studies and Related Wildlife," by *Dr. Matthew Perry*. His current research studies the migration patterns of seven species of ducks on a private ranch north of Buenos Aries. Hospitality 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

Montgomery. Informal Late Afternoon Walks Until Dusk. Joint MBC/ANS trips. Meet at the end of Seneca Rd at Riley's Lock "on the bridge" at 5 PM. After checking out the river we will proceed to Hughes Hollow. Highlights here will include waterfowl flying into roost. We will try for displaying woodcock if they are in the vicinity. Bring scope, flashlight, and wear "muddy conditions" footwear. Reservations not required. For more info call Jim Green at 301-742-0036 (m) or jkgbirdman53@gmail.com.

Saturday, March 14

Anne Arundel. Pickering Creek. Afternoon into evening trip for Woodcocks and night birds. Meet 2 PM at Bay 50 Shopping Center. More info: Colin Rees, 410-757-8570.

Baltimore. Youth Birding at North Point SP. Meet 9 AM at the small parking area on the left, just past the booth at the entrance. We will walk down the Black Marsh loop and back, and then go to the main parking area overlooking the Bay, looking for late ducks and early migrants. The walk is free, but there is a \$3 charge to enter the park. Wear good footwear, the trail can be mucky. Leader: John Robinson, 443-810-9059 (cell), 410-483-6620 (home), jcrobin@jhmi.edu.

Carroll. Woodcock Walk at Morgan Run. Come strain your eyes and ears to appreciate these curious birds as they perform their annual courting ritual. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at the end of Ben Rose Ln. Contact Bill Ellis at 443-520-8809 if you plan to attend.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH. **Cecil.** Cabin Fever. This family-friendly community outreach event will take place between 11 AM-2

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PM. We'll have supplies for children to make easy, pine cone bird feeders. Moore's Chapel United Methodist Church, 392 Blake Rd in Elkton. For more info contact Ken Drier at kdrier@zoominternet.net.

Harford. Swan Harbor Farm Park. This Harford Co gem with three impoundments, a commanding view of the Bay, wooded trails, and open fields has developed into a fine location for a broad spectrum of bird life, including waterfowl, marsh specialties, raptors, and sparrows. Meet at 8 AM for the interesting early morning activity. Park in the lot adjacent to the Agricultural Education Center (near end of driveway). Leader is Josh Emm (410-937-6790; apistopanchax@gmail.com).

Montgomery. Patuxent River Park, Jug Bay NA, PG Co. Half day. Joint trip with ANS. Waterfowl, Wilson's Snipe, winter and early spring songbirds, Ospreys displaying. Meet 8 AM at parking lot by park hdqtrs. Wear "muddy conditions" footwear. Reservations required. Limit: 15. Call the leader: John Bjerke at 240-401-1643.

Washington. Rocky Gap SP. Leave from the Hagerstown MVA parking lot at 6:45 AM. Contact Mark Abdy at 301-432-7696 to participate.

Saturday and Sunday, March 14 and 15

YMOS. MD Youth Birdathon. Ocean City to Western Shore. Remaining wintering birds, early migrants owls, and rails. Fund Raiser for the Youth World Series of Birding teams. The group will begin in Ocean City on Sat morning and end up in Dorchester Co by evening. The search will resume Sun morning in Dorchester Co and conclude at Bay Bridge late afternoon. Lodging will be available at local homes Fri night in Ocean City and for Sat night in Dorchester Co. Students will need money for meals. Logistics and specific times will be coordinated once we know who is going. Participants can participate in either or both days. Level: medium to advanced. Contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com to reserve a spot.

Sunday, March 15

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader: Allen Lewis, allenlewis@gmail.com.

Talbot. Southern Dorchester County and unexplored areas of Blackwater NWR for eagles, harriers, sparrows and possibly a short-eared owl or two. Leader: Dave Palmer, 410-829-3376. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM.

Tuesday, March 17

Montgomery. Informal Late Afternoon Walks Until Dusk. Joint MBC/ANS trips. Meet at the end of Seneca Rd at Riley's Lock "on the bridge" at 5 PM. After checking out the river we will proceed to Hughes Hollow. Highlights here will include waterfowl

flying into roost. We will try for displaying woodcock if they are in the vicinity. Bring scope, flashlight, and wear "muddy conditions" footwear. Reservations not required. For more info call Jim Green at 301-742-0036 (m) or jkgbirdman53@gmail.com.

Wednesday, March 18

MEETING AND ANNUAL FUNDRAISER. **Anne Arundel.** Subject and Speaker: An Accidental Big Year" by Neil Hayward. 7:30 PM at Quiet Waters Park, Blue Heron Center in Annapolis. More info: Colin Rees, 410-757-8570 or reescolin@hotmail.com.

Harford. Timberdoodle Search. Join this evening watch for one of our most interesting (and elusive!) birds, the American Woodcock, as it performs its mating sky dance. Meet at 7 PM at the Edgewood Home Depot on Rte 40 in the southwest corner of the parking lot. The leader is Phil Powers (410-679-4116; birdsinmd@verizon.net).

Thursday, March 19

MEETING. **Caroline.** Phil Davis will present "Update of the Maryland Next 10 List." 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton. Contact Debby Bennett at dabennett1996@gmail.com for more info.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Friday, March 20

ANNUAL SOCIAL. **Montgomery.** 6:30 PM at Woodend, Chevy Chase. Social hour followed by dinner and presentation to this year's Guest of Honor. The evening will conclude with the traditional members' slide show. See the back page of the MBC Feb '15 Chat at the MBC website (<http://montgomerybirdclub.org/>) for the signup form and info about submitting photos for the slide show.

Saturday, March 21

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: David Sandler, 410-370-0747.

Cecil. Blackwater NWR and Beyond. A trip designed to see large numbers of waterfowl during the height of spring staging season. Bald Eagles are a bonus feature and Ospreys may be newly arrived. Some early shorebirds might be on the move. Bring breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Dress for possible extreme cold and wind. Bring scope if you have one. Meet at the parking lot of Blackwater Visitor Center at 8 AM for a full-day trip. Or to carpool, we suggest making arrangements to meet near Dunkin' Donuts in Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40/213 in Elkton, at 5:30 AM. Contact: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net for all trip details.

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Frederick. Middle Creek WMA (north of Lancaster, PA). All-day trip. Looking for overwintering birds and early migrants. Leader: Lois Kauffman, 301-845-6690.

Harford. Harford Waterfowl Tour. Marvel at large rafts of scaup and search for species that are tough to find locally, such as Surf Scoter, Redhead, Long-tailed Duck, and Northern Shoveler. Beginners interested in learning the basics of waterfowl identification and experienced watchers searching for rarities will enjoy this morning trip to the Gunpowder River and Havre de Grace. Scopes are helpful, although not necessary. Dress warmly and must bring photo ID for entrance to APG. Meet at 6 AM in the back lot of the McDonald's in Edgewood on Rte 40. Contact leader Dave Webb (410-939-3537; porzana@comcast.net) for trip details.

Howard. Sharps at Waterford Farm. Moderate walking over crop stubble, farm roads, and paths on this working farm. Fields with crop residue, extensive woodlands, Cattail Creek and floodplain, three ponds and five shallow waterfowl impoundments make for diverse habitats and good birding opportunities. Meet 8 AM at farm parking area, through barns on right. Rte 97 S. to right on Jennings Chapel Rd, 1 mile to right into farm at sign. Port-a-pots available. Knee-high waterproof footwear required for part of walk. Leader: Wes Earp, wesandsue@gmail.com or 410-531-3197.

Kent. Little Creek and Ted Harvey WMA, DE. Tucked between the more well-known refuges on the DE Bay shore, these offer a mix of light woodland, fresh and salt marshes, open water, and bay shore with an excellent mix of bird species. Full day, bring lunch. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes mature woods along the Patuxent River, brushy fields, and a network of freshwater wetlands, ponds and small streams. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge NA. No reservations required. The Natural Area is located on the south side of Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net.

Sunday, March 22

Anne Arundel. Dairy Farm and other parks in this area. Meet 7 AM at Parole P&R. Leader: Dan Haas, nervousbirds@gmail.com.

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader: Mike Kerwin, m63kerwin@verizon.net or 410-461-2408.

Talbot. Easton WWTP and environs. Leaders: Paul and

Priscilla Thut, 410-745-6657. Breakfast hosts: Terry and Patty Allen. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM.

Monday, March 23

MEETING. **Tri-County.** "Tri-State Bird Rescue." 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury. For more info contact Betty Pitney at 410-543-1853.

Tuesday, March 24

MEETING. **Washington.** Program TBA. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 for info. 7 PM at the Mount Aetna Nature Center.

Saturday, March 28

Baltimore. Patterson Park. Early spring migrants found in this urban park may include Caspian Tern, Merlin, Pine Warbler, Fox Sparrow, or Woodcock! Meet 8 AM at the White House in park near intersection of Lombard St and Patterson Park Ave. For questions or to borrow binoculars for the walk, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center at ppaudubon@gmail.com or 410-558-2473.

Harford. Lapidum. Look for gulls, lingering waterfowl, and perhaps some early surprises with leaders Matt Hafner (410-971-3203; hafner.matt@gmail.com) and Mark Magnani (410-838-1778; mwmagnini@peoplepc.com). Add'l sites in Susquehanna SP may be visited. Meet at the Lapidum parking lot at the south end of Susquehanna SP at 7:30 AM.

Sunday, March 29

Talbot. Southwestern Caroline County in and around the village of Choptank. Views over the Choptank River can be rewarding in early spring for waterfowl and unusual gulls. Will visit Poplar Neck Marsh for marsh birds and sparrows. Leader: Dave Palmer, 410-829-3376. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM.

Wednesday, April 1

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "BIRDING WALES" by Michael Bowen. 7 PM at the Carroll Nonprofit Center, 255 Clifton Blvd, Westminster. Contact Don Jewell at jewelldg@gmail.com or 410-259-4716 for more info.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program and Speaker: TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton, Rm B120. For more info, contact Sean McCandless, seancmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, April 2

MEETING. **Frederick.** The famous annual FBC Bird Quiz! Your bird identification skills will be challenged by a series of pictures and sounds. Coordinators: Mike Welch and Kathy Brown. 7 PM

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at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info, contact Tom Humphrey, Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org or 301-696-8540.

■ Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, April 4

■ Allegany/Garrett. Garrett County Ponds (Finzel Swamp, Piney Reservoir, Meadows Lake and Campground, and New Germany SP). Pack a lunch. Meet at Parkside School in LaVale at 9 AM. Contact: Melissa Hensel, mjhensel@yahoo.com for more info or arrange an alternate meeting place.

■ Frederick. Driving Tour of Local Raptor Nests. Reservations required. Contact leader, Tom Humphrey at 301-696-8540 for all trip details.

■ Howard. Alpha Ridge Landfill. Half day. Vesper sparrow and other field birds possible. Meadowlarks, kestrels, and other open country birds expected. Meet 7:45 AM at Alpha Ridge Park to carpool to landfill. Moderate walking over hills and fields of the landfill. Contact Joe Hanfman for reservations, auk1844@gmail.com or 410-772-8424. Facilities available.

■ Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes brushy fields, woods, and hedgerows for a good mix of species. Side trip to freshwater wetland at Horsepen Branch also possible. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

Sunday, April 5

■ Talbot. Urban Birding: We will again (our 7th year) bird the variety of habitats around the Target Shopping Center as well as nearby locations in search of wintering birds and early spring migrants. Every year we have seen our FOY Rough-winged Swallows on this trip. We will scan fields, open water, tidal guts, wood margins, and hedgerows for early arriving migrants as well as wintering birds. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840.

Tuesday, April 7

■ Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Leader TBD. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact Pete Webb at 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com.

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Tonight: Speaker and topic TBA. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Info: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Thursday, April 9

MEETING. Howard. "Saving the Sage-Grouse and the Sagebrush Sea," by *Dr. Mark Salvo*, Director, Federal Lands Conservation for Defenders of Wildlife. The sage-grouse is a flagship and umbrella species for this western landscape and its conservation would help preserve hundreds of other species that depend upon this habitat. Hospitality 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

Saturday, April 11

■ Baltimore. Irvine Nature Center. Joint trip with our Youth Birding Group. With forest, field, and marsh this 116-acre site has an extensive trail system and is full of promise. Expect between 45 and 55 species with plenty of "little brown job" birds. Meet 9 AM. Contact leader for location. Leader: John Robinson, 443-810-9059 (cell), 410-483-6620 (home), jcrobin@jhmi.edu.

■ Cecil. Conowingo Wildflowers and Birds. Meet at Fisherman's Park below the Dam at 8 AM for a half-day trip. Bring scope if you have one. Easy walking on a level, well-graded trail (be prepared for some mud). Leader: Pat Valdata, pvaldata@zoominternet.net.

■ Harford. Perryman Area. Veteran leaders Phil Powers (410-679-4116; birdsinmd@verizon.net) and Dave Larkin (410-569-8319; dlarkin@towson.edu) will take you on an expedition, driving to various locations in the Perryman area known to harbor interesting birdlife from Horned Larks and Pipits to waterfowl and shorebirds. Depart from the Aberdeen WalMart parking lot (Rte 40) at 7:30 AM.

■ YMOS. Youth birding on the lower Eastern Shore (Nassawango Crk, Elliott's Island and Blackwater NWR). Early migrant search. Meet 7 AM (returning by 6 PM) at Sailwinds Park, Cambridge. Level: beginning to advanced. Contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com to reserve a spot.

Sunday, April 12

■ Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for waterfowl, raptors, and passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Crk. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 8:30 AM (contact leaders for meet location). Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

■ Kent. Turner's Creek and Sassafras NRMA. Explore a diversity of habitats from wood margins and small ponds to open fields, looking for spring migrants. Half day, bring snacks. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

■ Montgomery. Hughes Hollow and Vicinity. Half day. We will

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explore the wetlands of Hughes Hollow and Sycamore Landing. Species to be expected include Red-headed Woodpeckers, Wood Ducks, Blue-winged Teal, and many other marsh dwellers. A chance for several warblers including Prothonotary. Meet at Hughes Hollow parking lot in the McKee-Beshers WMA at 7 AM. Reservations not required. For more info, contact the leader: Jim Nelson at 301-530-6574 or kingfishers2@verizon.net.

Talbot. Belt Woods, Old growth forest in Prince Georges County. Property protected in Maryland Wildlands program. Chan Robbins was studying forest interior dwelling birds on this property in 1947. Leader: Cathy Cooper, 410-822-3451. Reservation Required. Leader at the site is the property manager. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM.

Monday, April 13

MEETING. **Talbot.** Speaker and subject TBA. 7 PM at Wm. Hill Auditorium, 501 Dutchman's Ln, Easton. For more info, contact Terry Allen at pattyallen10@hotmail.com or 410-829-5840.

Tuesday, April 14

MEETING. **Allegany/Garrett.** Speaker: *Dana McCauley*, Principal of Crellin School, and *Fran and Bill Pope*. Topic: "What's happening at Crellin School." 7 PM at Compton Hall, Rm 224, Frostburg State U. For add'l info contact Mary Huebner at marybrd22@gmail.com.

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Leader TBD. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact Pete Webb at 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com.

MEETING. **Kent.** "Hummingbird Banding and Research" by *Bruce Peterjohn*. 7:30 pm, Wesley Hall at Heron Point, off East Campus Ave, Chestertown. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** Speaker and Program TBA. 7:30 PM, College Park Aviation Museum, 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Dr, College Park. For more info call 301-509-2212 or go to www.pgaudubon.org/programs.html.

Wednesday, April 15

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** 7:30 PM at the Blue Heron Center at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. "Saving the Greater Sage-grouse and the Sagebrush Sea" by *Mark Salvo*, Defenders of Wildlife. More info: Colin Rees, 410-757-8570 or reescolin@hotmail.com.

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Birds of Ecuador." *Bob Mumford* has made 16 trips to Ecuador to photograph birds. He will show us the best of his photos from this wonderful country with a spectacular variety of species. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church,

10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info contact Ed Patten at epatten1022@verizon.net.

Thursday, April 16

MEETING. **Caroline.** Program: TBA. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton. Contact Debby Bennett at dabennett1996@gmail.com for more info.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, April 18

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Wendy Alexander, 410-788-4080 or drbeanes@verizon.net.

Harford. Harford Glen. Meet at the Glen (west end of Wheel Rd) at 7:30 AM. We will begin this tour with sightings from the parking lot, then proceed to survey the triple riparian habitats of Atkisson Reservoir, the faster flowing Winter's Run, and the Plumtree Run tributary. The woodland trails and open meadows offer great opportunities for good birding. Ruth Bergstrom (443-752-1967; ruthb22@yahoo.com) will be leading our trip.

Kent. Beginner's Bird Walk, Eastern Neck NWR. In honor of Earth Day, we'll spend 2-3 hrs exploring several of the Refuge's trails and overlooks, looking for a variety of migrants, from raptors to warblers. Half day, bring snacks. Meet at the Tundra Swan Boardwalk at Noon. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes mature woods along the Patuxent River, brushy fields, and a network of freshwater wetlands, ponds and small streams. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge NA. No reservations required. The Natural Area is located on the south side of Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net.

Tri-County. Nassawango Preserve. Migrating and resident vireos and warblers and other special birds of the swamp forest. Bring snacks and drink. Meet 7 AM in Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Leader: Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853.

Sunday, April 19

Talbot. East of Route 50. In search of late wintering and/or early arriving north bound transient species in forested bottomlands and open habitats in close proximity to Easton. Leader: Jan Reese, 410-745-2875. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of

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Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM.

Tuesday, April 21

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Leader TBD. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact Pete Webb at 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com.

Friday, April 24

Harford. Jerusalem Mill. Visit this appealing stretch of the Little Gunpowder River marking Harford Co's western border. Meet at the mill on Jerusalem Rd (off Rte152) at 7:30 AM. Leader is Phil Powers (410-679-4116; birdsinmd@verizon.net).

Saturday, April 25

Baltimore. Patterson Park. Catch Spring migration at this green urban oasis in the City. Meet 8 AM at the White House in park near intersection of Lombard St and Patterson Park Ave. For questions or to borrow binoculars for the walk, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center at ppaudubon@gmail.com or 410-558-2473.

Carroll. Liberty Watershed. Another great place for migrants. Meet 8 AM at parking area at east end of Bollinger Mill Rd. Leaders: Maureen and Dave Harvey, 410-795-3117. Moderate hike and could be muddy if recently rained. Expect kingfisher, herons, early migrants, woodpeckers, flycatchers, and warblers.

Cecil. Woodlawn Wildlife Area. Join us for a leisurely stroll around the fields and woods of this re-awakening natural area. Meet 7:30 AM at the Woodlawn Parking Area for a ½ day nature walk. Contact leader, Ken Drier, kdrier@zoominternet.net for all trip details.

NATIVE PLANT SALE. **Frederick.** Held by Audubon Society of Central MD at their Audrey Carroll Sanctuary. Please support this sale at one of our favorite and most productive birding hot spots. More info can be found at www.centralmdaudubon.org.

Harford. Susquehanna SP. An ideal time to enjoy emerging wildflowers, early migrant songbirds, and lingering winter visitors. Meet at the parking area at the confluence of Deer Creek and the Susquehanna River just north of Rock Run Mill at 8:30 AM. The leaders are Colleen Webster (410-459-4577; cwebster@harford.edu) and Sue Procell (410-676-6602; suzanne.procell@us.army.mil).

Howard. Mt. Pleasant Farm. 2-3 hrs. Meet 8 AM at parking lot near the barn. Easy walking through the fields of Mt. Pleasant farm. Tree lines, hedgerows, and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Great opportunity for flyovers. Facilities available. Co-leaders: Mike Kerwin, 410-461-2408 or m63kerwin@verizon.net.

Montgomery. Blue Mash Nature Trail/oaks Landfill. Half day. Interesting walk at these adjacent and surprisingly birdy sites in Montgomery County. Waterproof boots helpful at Blue Mash, but not needed at the landfill. Meet at 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Reservations required. Limit: 8 to 10 participants. For reservations and directions, contact the leader: Mark England at 240-375-4500 (m) or markengland@canamcontractors.com.

Talbot. Smith Island Excursion. Full day. We depart Somer's Cove Marina in Crisfield at 8 AM and travel across Tangier Sound and make stops on Smith Island at the villages of Ewell and Tylerton to bird and take in the sights. Always a nice mix of waterbirds, herons, egrets, Brown Pelicans, and a few migrant songbirds. Must make reservations with leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840 or pattyallen10@hotmail.com.

Washington. Enjoy a morning of birding at Altona Marsh near Charlestown, WV. Wear sturdy shoes as walking is on railroad tracks that bisect the marsh. Trip leaves from the Hagerstown MVA parking lot at 6:30 AM. Contact Mark Abdy, 301-432-7696 or Anna Hutzell, 301-797-8454 to register.

Sunday, April 26

Frederick. Little Bennett RP. Early warblers and other spring specialties. Leader: Kathy Calvert (301-810-5677).

Montgomery. Hugh Mahanes Presidents' Walk at Hughes Hollow. Half day. Participation of all former Club Presidents is encouraged, and everyone is welcome. Meet 7 AM at the Hughes Hollow parking lot. Reservations required. For more info contact leader: Ed Patten at epatten1022@verizon.net.

Talbot. Hope House Farm. This property provides a mixed habitat of forest, fields, and tidal waterfront. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 7 AM. Breakfast Hosts: Carolyn and Les Roslund.

YMOS. Western Shore Migrant Search. Preparation for the WSB. Meet 5:45 AM (returning by 6:30 PM) at Elkton McDonalds (Rte's 40/213). Level: beginning to advanced. Contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com to reserve a spot.

Monday, April 27

MEETING. **Tri-County.** "Bird Migration Studies," presented by Tim Schreckengost, U. of DE. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury. For more info contact Betty Pitney at 410-543-1853.

Tuesday April 28

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Leader TBD. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact Pete Webb at 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com.

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pete_webb@juno.com.

MEETING. Washington. *Chris Tawney*, Biological Science Technician at Antietam Battlefield, will discuss the Grassland Project at Antietam. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 for info 7 PM at the Mount Aetna Nature Center.

Wednesday, April 29

Harford. Cromwell Valley Park. Take an avian excursion through this Baltimore Co preserve sure to score well with spring migrants. The leaders are veterans Phil Powers (410-679-4116; birdsinmd@verizon.net) and Dave Larkin (410-569-8319; dlarkin@towson.edu). Meet at the commuter lot on the west side of Rte 152 (Fallston Rd) just north of Rte147 (Harford Rd) at 7 AM.

Saturday, May 2

Allegany/Garrett. Green Ridge SF for warblers! Meet at the P&R off Ali Ghan and Christie Rds at 8 AM. Contact Melissa Hensel at mjhensel@yahoo.com for more info.

Cecil. Fair Hill NRMA. Fair Hill in May is one of Cecil Co's birdiest spots. A variety of habitats, including woods, fields and wetlands, means that we will see a number of different spring migrants. Portions of the trail may be muddy, so boots are recommended. Meet 8 AM for this half-day trip at the Foxcatcher Farm Covered Bridge parking lot near the Fair Hill Nature and Environmental Center on Tawes Dr. There is an honor system daily fee (\$3 MD residents; \$4 out-of-state). Contact leader, Ken Drier, kdrier@zoominternet.net for all trip details.

Harford. 7th Annual Epic Birding Contest. The previous 6 competitions have been well-attended and good fun. So make room on your calendar to join us at Susquehanna SP. Birders at all skill levels welcome. Meet at the Rock Run Mill at 6:30 AM for team selections and rules review. Counting will begin at 6:45 AM and end at 11:30 AM. Rally celebration will occur at approximately 12 noon at the Laurrapin Restaurant in Havre de Grace. Family members and others are welcome to join the contestants for the celebration. Coordinators are Tom Gibson (410-734-4135 or gibsonlld@aol.com) and Sue Procell (410-676-6602 or suzanne.procell@us.army.mil). Rain date: May 3.

Kent. Millington NRMA. Spring migrants, woodland nesters, and open-country birds. Warbler migration should be in high gear in the woods and meadows of this excellent location for migrants and breeding forest birds. Half day. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MAY COUNT. Dorchester. 95th May Count. 1st of two Dorchester May counts. Compiler: Harry Armistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes brushy fields, woods, and hedgerows for a good mix of species. Side trip to freshwater wetland at Horsepen Branch also possible. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off

MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

Washington. Catoctin Creek Nature Center. Meet 7:30 AM at the Rte 66 P&R. Contact Shirley Ford at 301-241-3020 for start time and more details.

Sunday, May 3

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. Meet 8:30 AM at the Vollmer Center parking lot (4915 Greenspring Ave) for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

FRED ARCHIBALD MAY COUNT. Frederick. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6 AM. Coordinator: Bob Schaefer, 301-831-5660.

Montgomery. Occoquan Bay NWR. Half day. Explore the diverse habitats in this one-square mile refuge at the confluence of the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers in Woodbridge, VA. A variety of raptors and migratory warblers, vireos, thrushes, and flycatchers should be present, and rails and bitterns are possibilities. Meet at the parking lot in the center of the refuge at 7:30 AM. Reservations required. Limit: 25. For reservations, call the leaders: Mike Bowen at 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com, and Gerry Hawkins, 571-277-8406 or maineusa@comcast.net.

Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Near peak migration for warblers and vireos, including those breeding in this varied habitat. Contact the leader for time and directions. Reservations required. Leader: Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894.

Talbot. Pocomoke Swamp. We will bird the edge of the Nassawango Creek Preserve along Johnson Rd in search of migrant and resident songbirds with a focus on wood warblers. This location yields an average of 14-17 species of warblers, as well as vireos, tanagers, Indigo Buntings, Blue Grosbeaks and Red-shouldered Hawk. Full day. Bring lunch, drinks and snacks. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 6:30AM.

Monday to Sunday, May 4 to May 10

YMOS. World Series of Birding, Cape May, NJ. For YMOS WSB team members only. Trip departs at 5 AM Monday or Wednesday morning for 3-5 days of scouting. We'll participate in the Big Day on Saturday, trying to find as many species as we can in one day. We'll return Sunday around 4 PM after the Awards Brunch. The Birdathon fundraising will hopefully pay for the motel, the Awards Brunch, a T-Shirt, and most of the food costs. For more info, go to <http://www.ymos.org/> or contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com.

Tuesday, May 5

Baltimore. Robert E. Lee Park (Lake Roland). A series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Spring migration.

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Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Beginning birders welcome. Meet time 8 AM. Walks begin at the head of the Boardwalk, accessible from the Light Rail parking lot. Leader TBD. Check schedule at BBC website, <http://baltimorebirdclub.org/>, for updates or contact Pete Webb at 443-904-6314 (m) or pete_webb@juno.com.

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Tonight: Birds in Art and Human Culture. Panel Discussion. The subject of birds and human culture, particularly birds as the subject of art, is vast. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Info: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. Early migrant warblers, vireos, etc. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area #18, one-half mile below the Nature Center on Ridge Rd. Call the leader for more info and for specific directions. Limit: 8. Reservations required. Leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

Wednesday, May 6

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. Carroll. "An Australian Aviary" by *Dave Harvey*. 7 PM at the Carroll Nonprofit Center, 255 Clifton Blvd, Westminster. Contact Don Jewell at jewelldg@gmail.com or 410-259-4716 for more info.

MEETING. Cecil. Program and Speaker: TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton, Rm B120. For more info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, May 7

MEETING. Frederick. *Mike Welch* will tell us about the birds and history of New Zealand. 7 PM at a location TBD. Check the FBC website at <http://www.frederickbirdclub.org/> for update on location. For info, contact Tom Humphrey, Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org or 301-696-8540.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 6 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, May 9

MAY COUNT. Allegany. To participate, contact J.B. Churchill, jbchurchi@gmail.com 301-689-8344 or 301-697-1223 (m) to be assigned an area to count.

MAY COUNT. Caroline. Contact Debby Bennett at 410-829-4952 or dabennett1996@gmail.com for more info.

MAY COUNT. Carroll. Individual parties of counters will set their own schedules in their pre-arranged areas. Parties will count resident and spring migrant bird species throughout Carroll Co. Contact Don Jewell to verify your bird counting area at jewelldg@gmail.com or 410-259-4716. The Tally Rally will be hosted by Susan Bollinger at her home. RSVP to Susan at 410-848-2050 if you will be attending Tally. Please bring a cash donation (\$5) or a food item.

MAY COUNT. Cecil. Please contact the compiler, Richard Donham, (rdonham8@gmail.com or 610-932-0634) with your preference for the area where you wish to participate and for the fairly simple observation records that are needed.

MAY COUNT. Frederick. 50th Annual! It's peak migration so this is the most fun you can have working on a census. Lots of eyes and ears are needed! Compiler: TBD.

MAY COUNT. Harford. Help Harford contribute to this important data collection day and monitor migration throughout our locale. Contact the coordinator, Rick Cheicante, rickcheicante@cs.com or 410-803-2712, for assignment.

MAY COUNT. Kent. An all-day effort to census as much of Kent Co as possible. Join a field party or count in your neighborhood. Contact one of the leaders for details. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MAY COUNT. Dorchester. 96th May Count. 2nd of two annual Dorchester May counts. Compiler: Harry Armistead, harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

MAY COUNT. Montgomery. Compiler: Diane Ford, dmford455@yahoo.com.

MAY COUNT. Wicomico. Everyone can participate! Contact Ellen Lawler for details and checklists at 410-546-9056.

MAY COUNT. Washington County. Contact coordinator Mark Abdy, 301-432-7696, for guidelines and an assignment.

Montgomery. Youth Birding at Cromwell Valley Park. Our return visit to this park is at one of the best times for migrating warblers and vireos. In addition to them, we can expect to see oodles of orioles, bluebirds, Tree Swallows and other nesting birds, plus a wide variety of other migrants including cuckoos, thrushes, sparrows, and whatnots. Leader: John Robinson, 443-810-9059 (cell), 410-483-6620 (home), jcrobin@jhmi.edu. Meet 8 AM. Contact leader for specific location within CVP.

Montgomery. Izaak Walton League Property, B-CC Chapter. Half Day. The Club's 4th official trip to this large private property south of Poolesville. Woods, hedgerows, streams, fields, and ponds provide a wide range of bird habitats, and migration should be on its way by this date. Trip will start at 7 AM at the League's chapterhouse. Reservations required. For reservations and directions, contact Jim Nelson at kingsfishers2@verizon.net or 301-530-6574.

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WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING. New Jersey Audubon will proudly host the 32nd annual World Series of Birding-North America's premier conservation event. This event has changed the birding landscape and raised over \$8,000,000 for bird conservation. Every species found-every dollar raised preserves and protects critical bird habitat. Add'l info at <http://www.njaudubon.org/SectionWorldSeriesofBirding/WorldSeriesofBirding.aspx>.

Sunday, May 10

■ Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for late waterfowl, raptors, and passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Crk. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 8:30 AM (contact leaders for meet location). Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

AUDREY CARROLL

MAY COUNT. Frederick. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6 AM. Coordinator: David Smith 410-549-7082.

■ Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. Early migrant warblers, vireos, etc. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area #18, one-half mile below the Nature Center on Ridge Rd. Call the leader for more info and for specific directions. Limit: 8. Reservations required. Leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

■ Talbot. Millington WMA. Prime migration location; possibly 12-15 warbler species, vireos, thrushes, and flycatchers. Leader: Vince DeSanctis, 410-886-2009. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot (intersection of Rte 322 and Marlboro Rd) at 6:30 AM.

The Birdwatcher's Wife

(A Lament)

I love to go a wandering along the woodland trails;
I love the Cotswold countryside and Blockley's hills and dales.
However, it would seem a shame to savour it alone.
But Colin, my spouse of many years, as no doubt you have heard,
Gets overcome with ecstasy each time he sees a bird!

And so our walks are interspersed by sharp commands to
'freeze!'

Allowing him to focus on some movement in the trees,
While I just wait with bated breath not uttering a word,
And strain my eyes and try to make a sighting of some bird.

Now I'm as fond as anyone of our small feathered friends,
But scanning trees for hours and hours is where my patience ends!

Most of the birds are small and brown and not at all exotic,
So why waste so much time on them! It just seems idiotic!

Why can't we be like other folk and take a simple walk,
Not caring if we can't pick out a pigeon from a hawk?
I know I should be grateful, for what if he preferred
To spend his leisure moments with a different sort of bird?

The situation could be worse i really can't deny:
He could have been a criminal or else a Russian spy!
He could have been a convert to some crazy ideology!
Perhaps I'll count my blessings and take up ornithology!

by Irene Jowett, submitted by Colin Rees, Anne Arundel Bird Club

POSTMASTER: TIME-DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE EXPEDITE!

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles, photos, or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be e-mailed to Richard Donham by Mar 25, 2014 for the May/June 2015 issue.

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